



Department of Justice

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ATF SPECIAL AGENT PLEADS GUILTY TO THEFT OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A Special Agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) has pleaded guilty to a charge that he fraudulently collected government salary for hours he spent in the operation and management of a Perth Amboy, New Jersey used-car dealership he owned, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division announced today.

Godwin Herron, 54, of Leonardo, New Jersey, entered his guilty plea in a hearing today before U.S. District Court Judge Jose L. Linares of the District of New Jersey, Newark Division. Herron faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine at sentencing, scheduled for Feb. 6, 2005.

Herron began working for ATF as a Special Agent in December 1983. From December 1989 through July 2004, he served as New York Metropolitan Regional Coordinator for the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF), an investigative unit comprised of local, state, and federal law enforcement officers based in New York and New Jersey. As ATF's OCDETF representative, Herron – whose office was located in Manhattan – assisted in the investigation of firearms violations by members of large scale drug trafficking organizations. In 1997, Herron opened Boss Motors, Inc., a licensed car dealership in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. As owner and operator of Boss Motors, Herron bought and sold used motor vehicles for profit. His work with Boss Motors was not related to his official duties as OCDETF Coordinator.

As a federal employee, Herron was required to spend 80 hours per two-week pay period in the performance of his official duties, and, at the end of each pay period, he was required to submit Time and Attendance forms to ATF certifying that he was entitled to receive salary in payment for his having spent the requisite period in the performance of his official duties. In court papers filed today, Herron admitted that from May 14, 2003, through June 16, 2004, he stole \$18,000 in salary from ATF by submitting fraudulent Time and Attendance forms certifying that he had spent the requisite 80-hour time period in the performance of his official duties as OCDETF Coordinator, when in fact, he had spent a portion of that time operating and attending to the operations and management of Boss Motors, Inc.

The case was investigated by the ATF's Office of Professional Responsibility and Security Operations, with assistance from the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigations Division; and the Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Julian S. Greenspun and Natasha Tidwell of the Public Integrity Section of the United States Department of Justice, headed by Section Chief Noel L. Hillman.

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